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DALLAS CITY HALL  
CITY HALL PLAZA  
DALLAS  
DALLAS COUNTY  
TEXAS

HABS No. TX-3325

P H O T O G R A P H S

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

## DALLAS CITY HALL

The Dallas City Hall, designed by I. M. Pei of New York and Harper and Kemp of Dallas, was originally proposed in 1966. I. M. Pei/Harper and Kemp were hired May 30, 1966 to design the Municipal Administration Center, consisting the Dallas City Hall, an underground parking garage and a park. Bids were received March 26, 1970, which were rejected for cost overruns. The building was decreased in size, eliminating one of three basements, a skywalk, the Municipal Courts and jail, and left a large portion of the remaining two basements unfinished. The complex was bid again, but came in too high again. The project was split into two portions; the garage and plaza, and the building itself. The garage was bid and awarded December 27, 1971 to Robert E. McKee for \$10,131,760. The building was rebid with add and deduct alternatives, opening May 9, 1972. The building contract was awarded to Robert E. McKee for a sum of \$26,900,300. Work began on the building June 26, 1972. The complex was finished in December 1977 and formally dedicated March 12, 1978. The final cost of the building was \$32 million and \$11 million for the Park Plaza/Garage. Total costs including architect fees, furniture, site acquisition, paving and equipment were \$73,384,635.

Dallas City Hall is a cast-in-place, buff tone concrete building with post tension cables. A staff architect reviews all remodels for compliance with I.M. Pei's design standards. The building drawing set consists of 465-36"x48" mylars and the garage has 169 drawings. The plans, specifications, contracts and files are held by the Building Management Division, Building Services, City of Dallas.

Alterations to the building have been only internal and consist of sheetrock partition changes only.

A major remodel of the two lower level basements is planned to occur within the next few years. The majority of the basement was left unfinished as a cost cutting feature and will be used for office expansion space. The design architect will be the Building Services staff architect, David Grubbs.

The City Hall is laid out on a vertical and horizontal module of 4'-8". The basic shape is an elongated trapazoid, 560 feet long and 122 feet high, having seven floors of office space above grade with an eight floor housing mechanical equipment. Two below grade level basements house offices and building support functions. The south face of the building has concrete sun screens to help control glare and solar heat gain. The southeast and southwest corners are cantilevered, provided shape, and visual interest. The great court inside is lighted by three large barrel vaulted skylights. The north face is almost all glass and slopes at a 34° angle which precludes direct sunlight from hitting the glass. The 34° slope is created by the modules of three vertical modules of 14'-0" and two horizontal modules of 9'-4".

The building is laid out in six bays, each one being 65'-4' across. The depth of the bays increase from 114' at ground level to 168' at the seventh floor. The bays are clear span concrete supported by 4'-8" square coffer. The coffer form the ceiling, which also house air conditioning diffusers and 2'x2' light fixtures.

The walls are smooth cast in place concrete, with a light sand blast texture. The drywall partitions are a white painted surface with no texture. With the exception of the lobby, the building is completely carpeted in 18" square carpet tiles. The carpet is removeable for access to underfloor cellway housing electrical, telephone and computer wiring.

The color scheme of the building is buff concrete, orange and beige stripe carpet, stark white partitions, beige metal desks and upholstered chairs in dark blue, tan and maroon. The Council Chamber is carpeted in a dark forest green.

The site encompasses 4.7 acres for a park plaza covering a sub surface two level garage. The trees are native to the Dallas area, being live oak, cedar elm and red oaks. The park area to the south of the building has parking for 120 cars in a crescent shaped parking lot, plus a service drive. This south lot will have an addition to the present building at some time in the future.

A concrete ceremonial drive runs east to west in the north face of the building. Original schemes called for this drive to be used as a dedicated street, but this plan was scrapped.

David Grubbs  
City Architect  
Facilities Planning & Construction  
Building Services Department

